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News Release



EA 04-009
January 27, 2004
For Immediate Release

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Service Awards \$700,000 To Tribes In California For Fish And Wildlife Conservation Projects

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton today announced that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is awarding 79 grants, totaling nearly \$14 million, to help 60 federally recognized Indian tribes conserve and recover endangered, threatened and at-risk species and other wildlife on tribal lands.

The Service is awarding over \$700,000 to three tribes in California.

The Service is awarding the grants under two new cost-share programs, the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program (TLIP) and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program (TWG). These programs are similar to cost-share programs recently developed by the department to assist states, local communities, private landowners and other partners undertake wildlife conservation projects.

This is the first year for these tribal grant programs. However, last year the department provided \$34.8 million in grants to states under the new Landowner Incentive Program to assist private landowners in conserving and restoring the habitat of endangered species and other at-risk plants and animals on their property. The program was modeled after a successful program implemented by President Bush in Texas when he was governor.

“Native Americans have a unique relationship to and understanding of the land and its wildlife,” Norton said. “As part of the President’s overall Cooperative Conservation Initiative, the Interior Department is providing these grants to build on our partnership with the tribes to conserve tribal land and recover the wildlife, especially those species that are in decline.”

Of the \$14 million, about \$10 million will help fund 56 projects under TWG. These grants are awarded to federally recognized Indian tribes to benefit fish, wildlife, and their habitat including non-game species. Although matching funds are not required for these grants, they are considered to be an indicator of a tribe’s commitment. The maximum grant award under this program is \$250,000.

In California, three tribes are receiving wildlife grants. They are:

- \$249,957 for the Hoopa Tribe, Hoopa, CA, for a Northern Spotted Owl Demographic Analysis and Fisher Habitat Use, Population Monitoring and Dispersal Feasibility Study
- \$250,000 for the Rumsey Tribe, Brooks, CA, for the Cache Creek Cultural Restoration Project
- \$216,955 for the Twenty-Nine Palms band, Coachella, CA, for the Old Woman Mountains Preserve Program.

For additional information, please visit the Service's website at: <http://www.fws.gov>

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 542 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid Program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.